

# The Lion

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## GTALIBRARY An Orthodox Look at the Papal Encyclical '*Deus Caritas Est*'

BY FRANK ZAVERAL

**W**HEN I first heard on the broadcast media a very short take on Pope Benedict XVI's first encyclical entitled *Deus Caritas Est*, a media snapshot which emphasized the sex part about love, I could just anticipate the reaction: "Oh boy, just what we need (not!) ... another essay from Rome about sex, something about which old, celibate men claim to know more than any married couple."

But that view was crafted by the popular media, and with all things broadcast and printed these days, what was expressed was designed to quickly emphasize the sensational. After all, dear reader, that's probably what you expect to see in this piece – something that arouses a spirit of debate, controversy, even a few words that suggest suspicion of the Patriarch of Rome who is sadly separated from us Orthodox by the events of politics and what appear to this writer as mainly insignificant theological issues that culminated in the Great Schism of 1054, an end to which all Catholic and Orthodox faithful should pray for daily. But that's another topic. Back to *Deus Caritas Est*. God is Love.

And indeed He is. Without God, there would be no love of any kind, either erotic love between a man and a woman (*eros*), or love that is agape, love which is boundless with self-giving. Without God, there would be nothing,

for as Orthodox Christians we precisely and proudly profess in the Nicene Creed that "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible."

The encyclical on love generally has been well received. One of my acquaintances/correspondents in Rome, who professionally reports on happenings at the Vatican, informs me that reaction in Europe to the encyclical has been mostly positive, and one well known Vatican analyst has said that Pope Benedict has gone from the alleged "grand inquisitor" to "the grand lover." Perhaps in demonstration of this new title, the Pope spreads his wings to cite in the encyclical such diverse authors as Descartes, Virgil, Nietzsche, Aristotle, Pope Gregory the Great, Plato, St. Augustine, Sallust, Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr, St. Ambrose, Julian the Apostate, and Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite.

In America, one is hard-pressed at the time of this writing to find serious detractors. Some are ecstatic, like Father Kenneth Leone, Pastor of Denver's Roman Catholic Church of the Risen Christ, who is quoted as saying that when he read the encyclical he "began to cry." As Father Leone, who conducted funeral services for three massacred Columbine students, said so eloquently: "It's exactly what our world needs today. When are we going to start treating each other in love?"

Indeed, when? The Pope would have love in the world sooner rather than later, saying that "God is the condition for peace in the world" and by extension he would say no God, no love, no peace, and no reason with which to create a just state. Father Leone might have cause to weep, not only at the beauty of this fine encyclical, but also at the ugliness of our deteriorating world and substantial callousness toward the poor and all who suffer from every evil, and perhaps Christians everywhere ought to join with him in that concern.

What seems to be the first part of the encyclical deals with human sexual love from a theoretical point of view that, as the Pope himself said, is "the essence of love." The second part discusses charity and charitable organizations.





But the two parts are not unrelated, because the Pope emphasizes that these two topics are united into one thing. In describing why he wrote this particular encyclical, the Pope said that “it was necessary to show that man is created to love and that this love, which in the first instance is manifested above all as eros between man and woman, must be transformed interiorly later into *agape*, in gift of self to the other to respond precisely to the authentic nature of the *eros*.”

“God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him” (First Letter of John). A perfectly straight and forward thought. *Eros* directs man to marriage, a bond that corresponds to a monotheistic God and a monogamous marriage which “becomes an icon of the relationship between God and his people and vice versa.” But the word “love” in the modern world has been changed to a new form of eros which exalts the body, and is merely pure, intoxicating sex, and as the Pope says, a commodity, a thing which is bought and sold. As a result, humans themselves have become a simple commodity, and love is a word of impoverishment one is almost afraid to say. Benedict goes further: “Here we are actually dealing with a debasement of the human body: no longer is it integrated into our overall existential freedom; no longer is it a vital expression of our whole being, but it is more or less relegated to the purely biological sphere.” His prescription for these ailments is simple: “*Eros* needs to be disciplined and purified” so that *eros* and *agape* share “an ongoing exodus out of the closed inward-looking self towards its liberation through self-giving, and thus towards authentic self-discovery and indeed the discovery of God.”

The practice of self-giving love in the form of charity is the theme of the remainder of the encyclical. Love of neighbor that is related to the love of God is paramount for the modern Christian, both as an individual, as a local church, and as the universal church. In this section of the encyclical, the Pope gives a wonderful and impressive overview of the works of charity conducted by the early Christians and the early church. As the Pope rightly points out, it was works of charity and boundless love (*agape*) that distinguished early Christians. The Pope claims that the Church’s nature is expressed in its three-fold responsibility: (1) proclaiming the Word of God; (2) celebrating the Sacraments; and (3) exercising the ministry of charity. He says these are inseparable.

At the same time, Benedict believes that achieving a just state is the role of politics, not the primary role of religion. He cites St. Augustine who wrote that “a state which is not governed according to justice would be just a bunch

of thieves.” This author submits there are plenty of such states in the present world, and the Pope would probably agree. No need to mention them, but all my readers can probably identify most of these states where true justice does not reign supreme, if indeed it exists anywhere. But politics and faith are not totally disconnected. The Pope relates how faith purifies and liberates reason so that reason clearly can see how justice can be attained. Most appropriately, Benedict says that the Church should not take on the political battle to bring about the best possible just state, nor should the Church replace the state, but it has a role to play through rational argument and to provide spiritual energy.

As for individual Christians who do good works, he added that proselytizing in the process is not necessary, rather to “let love speak alone” which is the philosophy that guided Mother Teresa of Calcutta in her work, never dispensing charitable assistance based on the faith or beliefs, or lack thereof, of those she assisted, but rather employing ample *agape*. She in fact is mentioned by Benedict in a litany of saints who practiced charity in ways to be emulated in the best traditions of Matthew 25.

There is always relevance to what a contemporary Pope has to say about the modern world, and it’s easy to relate many aspects of Benedict’s encyclical to Orthodox views in particular, especially on the issue of selfless love/charity:

As Orthodox Christians, we have been entrusted with a sacred trust and as communicants of the ‘One Holy, Catholic (Universal) and Apostolic Church,’ we ought to consider it not an obligation but a unique blessing to help those in need. Since the first days of Christianity, the church organized philanthropic ministries for the poor, widows and orphans, held common meals and extended assistance to the members of the local community but also to those far off. Active philanthropy was not the exclusive responsibility of either the clergy or women but of all believers nor was it limited to offering financial assistance. Christian philanthropy is based on *selfless love* [emphasis added] and is altruistic, ever obedient to Christ’s exhortation, ‘A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another.’ (Taken from “Philanthropy Ministries,” by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America)

As it turns out, selfless love – *agape* – something recommended by Pope Benedict XVI in *Deus Caritas Est* is clearly something with which we Orthodox ought to be able to easily identify and to practice both in our marriages and in our charitable work so that we may become “fountains of living water in the midst of a thirsting world.” §



# ON MISSING CHURCH

*By Dom James Deschene, OSB*

Abbot of Christminster Monastery, Rhode Island

THE fecundity of the Orthodox mind is nowhere more evident than in the rich variety of excuses and reasons it can invent for not attending Sunday Liturgy. After two decades of being Orthodox, I am still taken aback by those who find it seemingly easy to excuse their absence from Mass on Sundays or feasts, or from Saturday or feast-day Vespers.

Roman Catholicism in the last days of the pontificate of Pius XII – and this may come as a surprise to some “cradle” Orthodox or converts to Orthodoxy from a Protestant background – was remarkably strict and observant about many things spiritual and religious ... No Roman Catholic in those days took lightly the requirement – for it was seen as a divinely ordained rule – to attend Mass on Sunday and certain feast days (known then as holydays of “obligation”).

Certainly some catastrophes – earthquake, flood, plague – could suspend the obligation. It was understood too that some medical conditions might legitimately excuse one from church attendance. Such things as measles or contagious disease, an appendectomy, the loss of a limb, or total paralysis might convince a Roman Catholic mother to keep her ailing child at home. Certainly no lesser ailment – a serious cold, a headache, a sprained muscle, a broken ankle – merited any consideration at all. And any complaints of tiredness or general lassitude would make on her no impression whatsoever. It was a simple and absolute rule: you went to Mass unless you were absolutely prevented from going.

Nor did travel away from home, or vacations, make a whit of difference. Wherever one happened to be – whether in an unfamiliar metropolis or the boondocks of Maine, one sought out, at whatever inconvenience of time or distance, the nearest Roman church and got to Mass. In those days, of course, you had to do all this on Sunday morning since Roman Catholics did not then have Saturday evening Masses.

Now it is easy to criticize this as the product of western or Roman legalism, but the fact is it worked ... In all of this, the hope was that one would be impressed by the seriousness of the obligation into seeing something of the awesome importance and spiritual reality of the liturgical mysteries.

Now for Orthodox people today, at least in parts of the United States, there is sometimes the legitimate problem that there is no easily available church to attend. Certainly members of the Russian Church Abroad, wishing to attend a Synod church, sometimes have to travel a good distance to do so. Others will attend whatever Orthodox church is available. Still others, of various jurisdictions, refuse to attend any church but that of their own jurisdiction – part of the bane of American jurisdictionalism. For those seeking a western-rite Orthodox liturgy, the difficulty can be even greater. The question must be asked: is it not better to attend an Orthodox liturgy in some church even outside one's jurisdiction, than not to attend at all?

While I do not propose to answer that question (merely to raise it), I do think the corrective for any laxity in Sunday attendance is best countered not by the imposing of a harrowing legalism ... but by holding a proper view of what Sunday Liturgy should mean for the Orthodox believer.

Not long ago I was on the scene when an Orthodox woman of my acquaintance (though not of my parish) described how she aggressively maintained Orthodox morality against some opinion of her neighbor of another denomination. Apparently, after settling her neighbor's hash, she ended with a resounding “We're Orthodox – we don't do those things!” This is perhaps in itself only mildly disedifying, though the smugness (to say nothing of the accuracy) of that last taunt is a mite questionable and a tad pharisaical. But the point of the story lies in the fact, known to me (and undoubtedly to the neighbor), that this woman rarely darkens the door of any Orthodox church.

To be Orthodox means more than holding “right doctrine” – it means engaging in “right praise” – i.e., right worship. And it means doing this at the right times, i.e., when the Orthodox Church realizes itself and becomes most itself and most visible – in its celebration of the Holy Eucharist, especially on Sundays, the day of Resurrection. To be absent from this occasion – this moment when the Orthodox Church becomes most embodied, most visible, most alive – is in a real sense a failure to be truly Orthodox. It is by being part of the occasion at that time and in that place that we truly are (and are seen to be) Orthodox in the fullest sense of that word.

What truly Orthodox believer would ever easily or readily excuse himself from joining in this living Mystery? And how paltry, in the light of the radiance and glory of the divine Mysteries, are our shoddy excuses. “The church is too far away.” “I was tired from watching the late show.” “We had company Saturday night and couldn't make it to Vespers.” “I was invited out for Sunday dinner and would be late if I went to church.” “We had to get an early start to get beach parking.” Hopefully, we all have the good sense to be ashamed when we fall back on such excuses.

Moreover, we owe it to our brothers and sisters in the faith to support their presence in church by our own presence. Especially in smaller congregations is the absence of an individual or family obvious and keenly felt. We know that – however small the congregation, however few the worshippers – the fullness of the Church is manifested wherever the Liturgy is celebrated. At that moment and in that place Orthodoxy lacks nothing. But it is equally true that, from a purely human perspective, the absence of some members of a parish family or community is always felt and always tends to undermine the joy of the Orthodox parish family gathering in its Father's house to celebrate our Saviour's victory over sin and death.

It is the nature of Christian joy to wish to share itself with others – to awaken others to God's welcoming home in his Church. So we seek to proclaim the joy and truth of holy Orthodoxy to others and to invite them in. How sad it is then, when we do this, when we bring newcomers into God's house, to find that those long a part of God's family are missing from that joyous homecoming. §



# The Passion – Its Work, its Manner, and its Motive

FROM A SERMON BY  
SAINT BERNARD THE ABBOT  
*De Passione Domini* (2-5, 10, 13, 14)

THERE are three things in the Passion that it behoves us specially to think about – its work, its manner, and its motive; and these three commend to us respectively patience, humility and love.

Matchless indeed was the patience of our Lord Jesus Christ. When sinners ploughed upon His back, when He was stretched upon the Cross, when Israel's strong Defence was wounded all over and His hands and His feet were pierced, He uttered no complaint against His Father Who sent Him, nor yet against mankind, for whom He was paying the things that He never took, nor yet against His chosen people, from whom in return for such great benefits He had received such wrongs.

When people suffer for their sins and take it humbly, we account them patient; and when others are chastened not so much to cleanse them as that they may be tried and crowned, then we esteem their patience greater still. How then shall we not deem Christ's patience greatest of them all, since He was punished like a thief with a most cruel death, in the midst of His own inheritance and by the very people He had come to save, although there was in Him no sin at all, either actual or original, neither was there in Him anything whatever in which sin could grow?

Patience is then supremely seen in Him, in Whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; in Him Whom God reconciles the world unto Himself, not in a figure but essentially; in Him Who, in a word, in His own Self is full of grace and truth, that He may accomplish His work. Isaiah calls it '*His strange work*'; the work was His, because the Father gave it Him to do, and it was strange that such a One should bear such sufferings.

In the work of Redemption, therefore, we have an example of patience. And if you ponder its man-



ner, you discover that the Lord was humble too. For when He was blasphemed and falsely accused, He answered not a word. '*We saw Him,*' says the Scripture, '*and there was no beauty in Him.*' He was the scorn of men and as it were a leper, a man of sorrows, stricken and humbled by God, so that there was no beauty or comeliness in him. O Least and Greatest! O Lowly, Lofty One! O Scorn of men and Glory of the angels! No-one is more sublime than He, and nobody is humbler. And will humility that goes so far, that indeed has no limits, merit no reward? As His patience was matchless, so was His humility marvellous; both were unique.

But the motive of the Passion commends both patience and humility; for it was love. Because of the great love with which God loved us, the Father did



not spare the Son and the Son spared not Himself. It was indeed great love, love beyond measure, love unlimited, patently surpassing all other loves that are. 'Greater love hath no man than this,' He says, 'that a man should lay down his life for his friends.' But Thy Love, Lord, was greater still, for Thou didst lay Thy life down for Thine enemies. For it was while we were still enemies that we were reconciled to Thee and to Thy Father by Thy death. What other love has ever been or ever will be, like to Thine? Thou sufferedst for the unjust and diedst for our sins; Thou madest sinners righteous without charge; Thou turnedst slaves to brethren, captives to fellow-heirs, exiles to kings.

And surely nothing commends His patience and humility as that He gave His own soul to death, and bare the sins of many, entreating even for his transgressors that they should not perish. For He was offered because He willed it; no one took His life from Him, He laid it down of Himself. So when He had received the vinegar He said, 'It is finished,' which is to say, 'Nothing remains to be fulfilled, and there is nothing now for which I have to wait.' Bowing His head, therefore, He yielded up the ghost. Who else could fall asleep like that, by the mere act of will? To die is a great weakness, normally; but clearly thus to die is boundless power.

Worthy, then, is such surpassing love, such marvellous humility, and such indomitable patience. Worthy is this Victim, so holy, spotless, and acceptable. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power to do what He came to do, to take away the sins of the world. For the Passion of the Saviour prevails against every kind of sin. And the Passion is not given to angels, for they have no need of it; nor is it given to the devil, who, once fallen, rises not again. But it is given to man – that is, to me. He was made in the likeness of men and took on Him not only a servant's form, so that he might obey, but a wicked servant's form, so that He might be beaten, and the form of a servant of sin, so that He might pay the penalty, although He had no sin. He plunged Himself into the depths of universal human misery, so that the devil's eye might not discern the mighty mystery of godliness.

See then, O Man, how gloriously that Majesty hath dealt with thee! He has embraced us through our toil and pain; let us return His embrace by acting and suffering according to His righteousness, saying with the Bride, 'I held Him, and I will not let Him go.' §



## HOLY WEEK SERVICES 2006

### PALM SUNDAY

Matins, 7:30 AM  
Early Mass, 8 AM  
High Mass with Liturgy of the Palms, 10 AM  
Evensong with Benediction, 4 PM

### MONDAY AND TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Matins, 7 AM  
Sung Mass, 7:30 AM  
Evensong, 4 PM

### WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Matins, 7 AM  
Sung Mass, 7:30 AM  
Evensong, 4 PM  
Tenebrae of Maundy Thursday, 8 PM

### MAUNDY THURSDAY

High Mass with Translation of Sacrament, 7 PM  
Watch at the Altar of Repose (*until Friday noon*)  
Tenebrae of Good Friday, 9 PM

### GOOD FRIDAY

Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday, 12 NOON & 6 PM  
Tenebrae of Holy Saturday, 8 PM

### HOLY SATURDAY

Paschal Vigil with First Mass of Easter, 10 PM

### EASTER DAY

Matins, 7:30 AM  
Early Mass, 8 AM  
High Mass, 10 AM  
Evensong with Benediction, 4 PM



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# APRIL MMVI

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						<b>1</b> <i>Lenten Feria</i> Matins – 8:30 AM Latin Mass – 9 AM Class – 10 AM Evensong – 4 PM CONFESSIONS
<b>2</b> <b>LENT IV</b> Matins – 7:30 AM Early Mass – 8 AM School – 9:10 AM High Mass – 10 AM Evensong – 4 PM	<b>3</b> <i>Lenten Feria</i>	<b>4</b> <i>Lenten Feria</i> S. Isidore of Seville, BCD	<b>5</b> <i>Lenten Feria</i> Matins – 7 AM	<b>6</b> <i>Lenten Feria</i> Matins – 7 AM	<b>7</b> <b>SAINT TIKHON OF MOSCOW</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 4 PM Supper – 6 PM Stations – 7 PM	<b>8</b> <i>Lenten Feria</i> Matins – 8:30 AM Latin Mass – 9 AM Class – 10 AM Evensong – 4 PM CONFESSIONS
<b>9</b> <b>PASSION SUNDAY</b> Matins – 7:30 AM Early Mass – 8 AM School – 9:10 AM High Mass – 10 AM SERVER TRAINING Evensong – 4 PM	<b>10</b> <i>Passiontide Feria</i>	<b>11</b> <i>Passiontide Feria</i> S. Leo the Great, BCD	<b>12</b> <i>Passiontide Feria</i> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 4 PM	<b>13</b> <i>Passiontide Feria</i> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 4 PM	<b>14</b> <b>Compassion of Our Lady</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 4 PM Supper – 6 PM Stations – 7 PM	<b>15</b> <i>Passiontide Feria</i> Matins – 8:30 AM Latin Mass – 9 AM Class – 10 AM Evensong – 4 PM CONFESSIONS
<b>16</b> <b>PALM SUNDAY</b> Matins – 7:30 AM Early Mass – 8 AM School – 9:10 AM High Mass – 10 AM Evensong – 4 PM	<b>17</b> <b>Monday in Holy Week</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM	<b>18</b> <b>Tuesday in Holy Week</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM	<b>19</b> <b>Wednesday in Holy Week</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 4 PM Tenebrae – 8 PM	<b>20</b> <b>MAUNDY THURSDAY</b> High Mass – 7 PM Tenebrae – 9 PM	<b>21</b> <b>GOOD FRIDAY</b> Liturgy with Communion – 12 PM Liturgy – 6 PM Tenebrae – 8 PM	<b>22</b> <b>HOLY SATURDAY</b> Paschal Vigil with First Mass of Easter Day – 10 PM
<b>23</b> <b>EASTER DAY</b> Matins – 7:30 AM Early Mass – 8 AM School – 9:10 AM High Mass – 10 AM	<b>24</b> <b>EASTER MONDAY</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM	<b>25</b> <b>EASTER TUESDAY</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM	<b>26</b> <b>Wednesday in Easter Week</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 4 PM	<b>27</b> <b>Thursday in Easter Week</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 4 PM	<b>28</b> <b>Friday in Easter Week</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 4 PM	<b>29</b> <b>Saturday in Easter Week</b> Matins – 8:30 AM Latin Mass – 9 AM Class – 10 AM Evensong – 4 PM
<b>23</b> <b>LOW SUNDAY</b> Matins – 7:30 AM Early Mass – 8 AM School – 9:10 AM High Mass – 10 AM Evensong – 4 PM	<b>May 1</b> <b>Ss. PHILIP &amp; JAMES, APOSTLES</b>	<b>2</b> <b>S. Athanasius the Great, BCD</b>	<b>3</b> <b>INVENTION OF THE HOLY CROSS</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 4 PM	<b>4</b> <b>S. Monica, W.</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 4 PM	<b>5</b> <b>S. GEORGE THE MARTYR (Transferred)</b> Matins – 7 AM Mass – 7:30 AM Evensong – 4 PM	<b>6</b> <b>S. John Before the Latin Gate</b> Matins – 8:30 AM Latin Mass – 9 AM Class – 10 AM Evensong – 4 PM





**ABOVE** – Congratulations to the Manney clan (Debbie, Michelle, and Michael) who were recently chrismated.



**ABOVE** – Churchwomen Katherine, Laurie, Jane and Pamela at the Valentine's Day Luncheon. Many thanks to the Churchwomen for hosting, and to all that attended. **BELOW** – Kit Brown and her son Darren at the Valentine's Day Luncheon.



**ABOVE** – Congratulations to the new president of the Churchwomen, Judith Tochihara, and thanks to the outgoing president, Karen Goyette. **BELOW** – Many thanks to our SOYO Teens, who recently hosted a Fundraising Luncheon.



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## THE LION

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